

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for treating a wound by removing a protease from the site of the wound, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) determining the particular protease that will be removed from the wound site;

(b) selecting a protein-containing fibrous component capable of removing said particular protease;

(c) forming a dressing from said protein-containing fibrous component;

(d) applying said dressing to said wound and allowing at least a portion of said particular protease found at said wound site to be attracted to and entrapped by said protein-containing fibrous component; and

(e) removing said dressing from said wound so that at least a portion of said particular protease is removed from said wound site.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein said protein-containing fibrous component comprises silk fiber.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein said protein-containing fibrous component comprises wool fiber.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein said protein-containing fibrous component comprises a protein-containing fabric.

5. The method of claim 4 wherein said protein-containing fibrous component comprises silk gauze.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein said dressing is formed from a non-protein-containing material in addition to the protein-containing fibrous component.

7. The method of claim 6 wherein said non-protein-containing material comprises cotton fibers.

8. The method of claim 7 wherein said cotton fibers are interwoven with said protein-containing fibrous component.

9. The method of claim 8 wherein said protein-containing

fibrous component comprises silk fibers.

10. The method of claim 1 wherein said particular protease comprises elastase.

5 11. The method of claim 1 wherein said particular protease comprises neutrophil elastase.

12. The method of claim 1 wherein said particular protease comprises gelatinase.

13. The method of claim 1 wherein said particular protease comprises gelatinase B (MMP-9).

10 14. The method of claim 1 wherein said particular protease comprises plasmin.

15 15. A method for treating a wound by removing a protease from the site of the wound, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) applying a wound dressing to said wound site wherein said wound dressing comprises a protein-containing fibrous component capable of removing said protease; and

(b) allowing said wound dressing to withdraw and entrap said protease so that healing of said wound is promoted.